

## SHACKLETT

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ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.The Evolution  
of a StatesmanBY  
Walter Barr

## CHAPTER XXIII.

THE DOOR OF HADES.

Shacklett had a good deal of thought to his future during the last year or two of his term. He could become general counsel of one of several large corporations, and that would make his income four or five times what it was now. The money would obtain many things, but he would not obtain the satisfaction of soul that his seat in the Senate gave him. However, all these things were not very relevant to the discussion with himself, and he went to the heart of the matter. It took him three days—or the parts of days that he was at home—to discover that his wife got more satisfaction from the position than he himself did, and that she would not exchange it for any position in private life paying twenty times the salary. That decided the question for him, and he began to look closely after politics at home. His State was particularly interested in an irrigation bill, and that bill finally became a law after more narrow escapes than Shacklett and its originators liked to recall. This success, where others had failed, made the outgoing State his partisan beyond danger, but there was a catch in the matter. His own home city which was rapidly growing too large to be covered by one man's hand or diverted by one man's power. His wife called the office seekers grasshoppers, and Shacklett felt that his grasshoppers were coming home to roost in his own favorite fields and in a cloud that looked ominous. Turner wanted the postoffice, and what was worse, everybody else wanted it. Shacklett and some people who did not want it wanted him to have it. Shacklett knew that Turner was without a peer as a rascal in politics, but he knew some other men in the same category. He determined not to recommend Turner if he could help it, but was not sure whether he could help it. He would have to succumb to the inevitable. He worried over the matter for several weeks while the papers in the case continued to pour in, and then came a telegram stating that six of the right people were coming to Washington to see him about it. Shacklett tore the telegram into pieces in an abstracted way, but his eyes were shining, and his mouth had the same old smile of hand lines which was not seen so often lately as a few years before. That interview would be something tangible, and it would be a battle royal, in which he hoped the best man would win—the best man, of course, being Senator Shacklett. Shacklett received the party from home in his committee room, and in half an hour of social chat and joviality, which all agreed, he managed to discern that all of them were deeply earnest, and that Colonel Baker was to do most of the talking. He himself opened the topic which had brought them there, and his first move was in the words:

"That reminds me, colonel, of the time the reform element carried the city because things got so rotten in our party that they wouldn't hang together any more. You remember that campaign, don't you?"

"Yes," replied the colonel, "and it reminds me of something, too, which is the same thing. If I thought it would I'd go home and start a reform movement and land in the Senate. It won't work."

"Everybody laughed with the colonel, who was sitting on the edge of a chair in front of Shacklett, with his hat held between his knees and his round face fairly radiant with good humor. He leaned forward a little more, reduced his smile by a large fraction, but kept a tone of great good humor as he continued:

"Now, senator, I'm going to talk to you in a new way. Your best friends don't know you well yet at home, but I do. Since you've been on the other side of the case you haven't changed a bit—since you used to work for Governors and senators at Springfield in the old days, long before either of us ever thought of going on a chase after the reform. You used to be the frankest man that ever lived for an appointment, and I'm going to be the frankest man you've ever heard ask you for an appointment since you've been handing them round instead of scheming to get another fellow to make them. You know I'm your best friend, and anything I may say will eradicate that from your mind. I'm going to tell you that you must give that postoffice to Turner, and I've taken the contract to succeed."

"But, John, you—"

"Now, let me talk till I quit, and then, if you have any 'buts' or 'ifs,' I'll put in a rejoinder. Just now I've got a mandamus to the, you see."

Senator Shacklett smiled and then settled back in his chair and allowed his face to relax until it took on the absolutely immobile, expressionless features that made somebody at home once say it looked like a sandbar just after the river went down, and indicated about as much as a field of wheat stubble. He puffed his cigar with the regularity of an engine, although every other man in the group was rapidly breathing out masses of smoke and trying to flick the visible ashes upon the floor with a little finger that sometimes missed the end of the cigar half an inch.

Besides Colonel Baker, there were two members of the lower house who were nearest to the Governor, the chairman of the State central committee, and two others of Shacklett's closest political friends. Of them all Shacklett secretly liked Colonel Baker best, and he knew that the colonel was the most persistent and successful campaigner in the State. The opening words upon the business at hand meant that Senator Shacklett had a bad half hour before him, and he himself knew that it was to be the cruellest half hour of his life. He intended to hold out against the devil in the last ditch, but he felt that a ditch is, after all, a difficult earthwork to defend. The colonel's reference to the old days was the first shot that hit Shacklett's intrenchments, for in those days he had persistently refused to recognize that there was a stopping place. Of late years he had decided that there are depths into which even he would not descend, and which he would avoid at any cost; so that, as the colonel talked on, Senator Shacklett reinforced his low redoubt, and was as calm as a big light away from him. "It's exactly this way," continued the colonel, "and you and I both know it. The other man is a gentleman and an honest man, and against him no man can say a word except that he never carried more than one ward at a time in his life. Our man Turner is as far from being a candidate for heavenly honor as I am from being a candidate for holy orders. He hasn't spent a cent in this fight for the postoffice, I'm telling you, and we pay our own expenses for this trip even. Why is this queer kind of a campaign? I'll tell you what you already know."

"There's not a man of our crowd in the State but owes Turner more than he can ever pay. Who was it stole that box of ballots and elected me that time? I don't know, but Turner does. Who was it that sent Major Jim over the road for five years and three months before that treasury

scandal came out? Turner's brother gave the strongest evidence at the trial, you remember. Who was it that got up that Spanish grant story on the fellow that thought he had old Clark beaten for Governor? Turner started that most successful lie. Who was it that left the title out of the engrossed copy of the redistricting bill so our two friends might come back to keep you good company in Washington? Turner was engrossing clerk that term, if Robbins did have to pay the penalty for it. In short, who saved all our scalps, time and again, but Turner? And, moreover, he did things that nobody else would take the chances on for us. That's why we are for him, and why, if he doesn't get the postoffice he wants, there's going to be the biggest cloudburst, avalanche and mine disaster, all in one, that our State ever saw. You know I'm telling the truth. You know that with it all Turner hasn't got an enemy in the State."

Senator Shacklett moved his eyes toward the colonel, the merest trifle.

"Of course, all the preachers and the Christian Endeavor society and the Salvation Army of politicians are raising Cain. The reformers are against him, but who ever heard of a reformer going to a primary? You don't care for their buzzing any more than you do for the froth on a bottle of soda pop, and it's no use to lug that in. They—"

"But why not select a man who has been a valuable party man without taking up the most odorous one in the State? I don't want a Sunday school teacher, but I don't like to take the nephew of the devil. There are others, aren't there? Say, colonel, can't we compromise this thing some way? I don't believe you folks can pick another man in the State besides Turner that I won't endorse."

"Compromise nothing, senator! It's Turner or fight. The pot's too big to divide now, and the biggest hand takes it. Come, senator, admit we've got it, and stay here in the Senate as long as you please without a bit of bother."

"Gentlemen, I've never posed as a Puritan in politics. You might as well try to make a prospector out of a tenderfoot as to expect to make a politician out of a preacher. But there's got to be a limit somewhere, for any game without a limit is too dangerous a game for me to stay in. If I endorse Turner I take the limit off for all time, for I'll never run up against a worse man than our friend Turner, as I look at it, colonel."

"All right, we'll admit that. But why do we want any limit on? The rest of us can't write 'U. S. S.' on public documents yet, and we consider that about the proper limit. If you must stop at any ravine at all you'd better not try to climb the mountain of politics, and stick to the flats. I haven't any argument against moralizing, and I don't need to make any to you, senator."

"But you can appreciate this," rejoined Senator Shacklett, "when I call your attention to the fact that it isn't good politics. You can climb on a limb for some distance all right, but if you crawl out too far down you drop. You can get pretty far away from Ten Commandments in politics, but when you get clear to the door of Hades you're mighty likely to get the stuffing knocked out of you in the most surprising way. What's the use of loading the party down with this dead load of Turner for posterity when we don't have to?"

"But, you see, we do have to," smiled the colonel, "continued with a very grave face, which began to get somewhat flushed. "You see, we do have to, for if we don't we've got to fight the whole organization, from center to circumference. The party says it must have Turner appointed. It takes the responsibility in the person of the chairman here, the Times, and everybody from the central committee to the ward workers. You needn't bother about all around. You can eat your cake and have it, too. You can keep your conscience, or whatever you call it, clear, prevent any roorback, and keep ready to say 'I told you so,' and we'll credit you up the same as if you had endorsed Turner and take care of your future just the same. I mean we'll give you at least two more terms in the Senate. Where he went to, we'll answer, to put up a campaign for the girl and let the sea here go to the dogs. By the time he does she decided it doesn't pay to be too good and met him at the door with a request to withdraw the papers in the case. Just then we elected him out home, and he had the girl and the Senate both. He always was the luckiest fellow I ever saw."

"Now, that same girl that thought she couldn't marry a man that had suggested a state senator, when she had decided to be naughty and become an accessory after the fact, took a header clear to the bottom of the gulch. She's become interested in politics, and you know how big a help she is to Shacklett. You never suspected she came near passing him up to marry a preacher, did you? She likes Washington, and if it's necessary to continue this story further you'd better take another eye-opener out of that bottle there."

"But," cried the member from the lower house, "how do you know she can control him after we fix her?"

"That's to be worked out in the details," the colonel replied, "but details seldom get away with me. I believe I'll win. It won't cost a cent, anyhow, for the likelihood of having to leave Washington will be more to her than to stand to lose a million or so. That's the thing to hold out to her. She won't need the money, either, as sure as Turner don't get that seat again. He'll be a good deal of a little while, I'm going up to see her, anyhow."

[To be Continued.]

I'm going to presume on our friendship to ask you to come in to-morrow afternoon, and then I promise you to have a definite answer. Won't that do?"

The others chorused acquiescence, considering that delay was better than the answer they were certain to get if they insisted on one just then, but Colonel Baker kept silent and struck a match with particular savagery to light another cigar before he went out. As soon as they were gone the private secretary to the senator came in, and was met at the door by the words:

"Mr. Edwards, I've decided to turn Turner down. I want to feel that there is something that I won't do in politics, after all. I've had a rather varied career, but because I've done some things nearly as bad as Turner ever did is no reason why I should throw conscience and honor to the winds entirely. Please give out a hint to the newspaper people without allowing them to claim any authority, and fix up the papers in the case so I can go up to the department with them in the morning."

The party of Turner's friends maintained uncommon silence on the way to Colonel Baker's room. The colonel himself was abstracted, and the others saw that he desired to be let severely alone. Once in his room his face was clearer, and he motioned the others toward the decanter on the table with some little appearance of cheerfulness. The representative of the Governor was the first to address him directly, and his remarks, censured for politeness, amounted to the observation that, since their last hope had faded in the failure of the colonel's plan, they might as well go home and prepare to dig Shacklett's political grave, taking great care not to be buried with him, if, indeed, this last catastrophe were avoidable. But the colonel, long that for his ignorance of when he was whipped, took a fresh cigar with considerable liberation, lighted it with considerable care and sat down by the window with a thoughtful face.

"I'll tell you," he said, "what one of my remarks up there meant. You see, I knew Shacklett long before he came West. I got there a year or so after he did, and you feel that you knew him first; but I learned his plays in Illinois long before that. But he lived at the Palace in Springfield when he did, and I was in the Legislature one term when he was in one of the offices in the Statehouse." The colonel smiled in fond reminiscence.

"I'm willing to go a little surer that we win out yet. Of course, he told us to-day that he couldn't be moved, as plainly as if he had said so in many ways. But for that he overrode the mark. That delay until to-morrow is what saves us, or I don't know Mr. Stoddard."

The other men glanced up quickly, and every cigar sent up merely a thin spiral of blue smoke from its motionless end.

"Oh, no," the colonel said at once, "that's his wife. She was born and raised at Warsaw, in Mississippi, over in the Fifth district, you know. Say, you never found out why he threw up that fight for the Senate and left town so suddenly, did you? It's not so very strange, after all, when you understand it. And our getting Turner in hangs on that same trip, by the way. I might as well tell you all about it, for whether it works or not it's a good scheme, and you must admit that when you know the story in all its details."

"It was this way: He was at Springfield one session acting as distributing agent for the proprietors of the finest watermelon that ever was cut in any state capital, and he got a plump sell just like this one. Old McNamara, from Egypt, was his particular friend, and the gang needed just one more vote. Shacklett got two hundred votes in a ward to get old Mac, and Mac said he'd do it for nothing for him. Then Shacklett wouldn't let him do it, though he was dead gone on the girl he afterward married, and needed the stuff to start out on the marital sea with. Well, after he came West she found out a little about it, and thought old Mac refused him and given him a combed down, she'd get something better. So she was as near an angel as she ever got. I can testify from personal knowledge. She writes him a letter throwing him over for being so wicked, and he gets it the same morning that he dropped the senatorial fight in our caucus. He didn't want the Senate without the wife, you see. Where he went to, we'll answer, to put up a campaign for the girl and let the sea here go to the dogs. By the time he does she decided it doesn't pay to be too good and met him at the door with a request to withdraw the papers in the case. Just then we elected him out home, and he had the girl and the Senate both. He always was the luckiest fellow I ever saw."

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[To be Continued.]

Five persons were killed and ten were wounded in a conflict between the troops of the United States and the Apaches, in the extreme southeastern part of Italy on Monday.

## FARM AND GARDEN INTERESTS

## Clover and Nitrogen.

Nitrate of soda is extensively used for its nitrogen, and, as it is very soluble, it is at all times available for the use of plants. It contains about 16 per cent. of nitrogen, or 320 pounds per ton of nitrogen. The cost of the nitrogen, it may be considered, is \$48 per ton of nitrate of soda. The price of nitrogen is not fixed, however, and varies according to the demand and supply. An application of 1,000 pounds of nitrate of soda is considered a large one, and 500 pounds is even far above the average. Estimating 1,000 pounds of nitrate of soda at \$24, and containing 160 pounds of nitrogen, it may be considered a large expenditure for a farmer to devote to one acre, but when the nitrogen is grown on the farm the gain to the farmer may be equal to the value of a crop that is sold in the market. A yield of four tons of clover hay on a farm is equivalent to 1,000 pounds of nitrate of soda, in nitrogen, estimating each ton of hay as containing 100 pounds of nitrogen. Such a crop, therefore, if not harvested at all, and allowed to rot in the field, would be equivalent to 320 pounds of fertilizers purchased for the nitrogen contained. But the clover contains a large amount of hay as food for stock, as it is then not only converted into milk or meat, but that the nitrogen is not lost. The clover is reduced to a more available condition for plants by being passed through the bodies of the clover, and the nitrogen is not lost. The mass of roots and stubble left over in the ground are nearly equal to the mass of roots and stubble left over in the ground. The clover is reduced to a more available condition for plants by being passed through the bodies of the clover, and the nitrogen is not lost. The mass of roots and stubble left over in the ground are nearly equal to the mass of roots and stubble left over in the ground. 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